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**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment
Programme**

**United Nations Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme
Third session**
Nairobi, 4–6 December 2017

Draft proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its third session

I. Opening of the session (agenda item 1)

1. The third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (Environment Programme) was held at the headquarters of the Environment Programme in Nairobi from 4 to 6 December 2017.

2. The session was opened at 10.25 a.m. on Monday, 4 December 2017, by Mr. Edgar Gutiérrez Espeleta, President of the Environment Assembly. At the President's invitation, the Assembly observed a minute of silence to commemorate Mr. Buri Mohamed Hamza, Minister of State for Environment of Somalia, who had recently lost his life in a terrorist attack in Somalia, and all those who had died working for a pollution-free environment for their communities.

3. At the suggestion of the President, the Assembly welcomed the more than 2.3 million pledges signed by individuals across the world, which were introduced by two young girls, to take action to reduce pollution under the #BeatPollution campaign of the Environment Programme.

4. Opening statements were delivered by Mr. Edgar Gutiérrez, President of the Environment Assembly; Ms. Judi Wakhungu, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Water and Natural Resources of Kenya; Mr. Erik Solheim, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme; Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly of the United Nations; and Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, on behalf of Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

5. In his opening remarks, Mr. Gutiérrez expressed the hope that the Assembly would meet or exceed the expectations of the nearly 2.5 million people who had signed the #BeatPollution pledge and adopt a credible route to deliver on its resolutions and move towards a pollution-free planet through a more efficient and inclusive circular economy. Stressing that the conference badges of the current session of the Assembly were made of recycled plastic and that the session would be carbon neutral, avoid the use of plastic bottles and save 0.3 tonnes of paper, he said that the theme of the current session, "Towards a pollution-free planet", sent a strong message.

6. Mr. Gutiérrez said that the Science, Policy and Business Forum and the Innovation Expo held as side events at the current session showed that technologies and viable solutions existed to achieve the goal of reducing pollution, and that all stakeholders had a role to play in that regard.

7. In her opening remarks, Ms. Wakhungu welcomed participants to Nairobi and said that the theme of the current session was very timely. The Government of Kenya had reached several

milestones in addressing overall pollution, one being the enactment of a ban on the manufacturing and use of plastic bags, which had become effective in August 2017 and would contribute to reducing plastic-related pollution in Kenya. Stressing that her Government remained committed to supporting the Environment Programme, she urged the Programme to fully implement the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

8. In his opening statement, Mr. Solheim drew attention to three key elements that he said were indispensable if the Environment Assembly was to succeed in helping the world to move toward a pollution-free planet. The first was government leadership; the second was engagement with the business sector, which he said was the main holder of innovation; the third and last element was engagement with the world's citizens and the civil society organizations that represented them. In this context, he urged member States to support the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to reform the Organization in order to make it less bureaucratic and more effective.

9. In his opening remarks, Mr. Lajčák said that people were at the centre of pollution, since it was human beings who were damaging the environment and eroding the planet's capacity to support them, and it was also human beings who were suffering the most as a result of pollution, which was negatively affecting their health, well-being and livelihoods, including through damages to the ecosystems on which their income depended, increased healthcare costs and productivity losses.

10. The current session, he said, was being held at a moment of great danger, owing to the growing risks posed by climate change and environmental degradation, but also of great opportunity, as international commitments to reduce such risks had never been greater. As the highest-level decision-making body on the environment, the Environment Assembly must seize this opportunity and adopt multilateral commitments leading to multilateral action to tackle pollution. Action was needed to educate the public on the health and economic effects of pollution; to clean up pollution and help those suffering from its adverse health effects; to adopt tighter waste management regulations and new pollution-related local, national and regional laws and policies; and to invest in environmentally sound technologies so economic growth did not come at the expense of the planet.

11. In her address, Ms. Zewde called on member States to support the ambitious reform agenda of the Secretary-General, which she said the United Nations Office at Nairobi was supporting with the aim of increasing Africa's place in the United Nations and the place of the United Nations in Africa. She then delivered a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

II. Organization of work (agenda item 2)

A. Adoption of the agenda

12. The Environment Assembly adopted the following agenda for the session, on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/EA.3/1):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Organization of work:
   (a) Adoption of the agenda;
   (b) Organization of work.
3. Credentials of representatives.
4. Report of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
5. Performance of the programme of work and budget, including implementation of the resolutions of the Environment Assembly.
6. Administrative and budgetary issues.
7. International environmental policy and governance issues.
8. Update on the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook report.
9. High-level segment.
10. Adoption of the outcomes of the session.
11. Election of officers.
12. Provisional agenda and date of the fourth session of the Environment Assembly.
13. Other matters.

14. Adoption of the report.

15. Closure of the session.

B. Organization of work

13. In accordance with rule 60 of its rules of procedure, the Environment Assembly agreed to establish a committee of the whole for the consideration of various items of its agenda. The Assembly further agreed, in accordance with the recommendations of the Bureau, that the Committee of the Whole would be chaired by Mr. John Matuszak (United States of America), that Mr. Travis Sinclair (Barbados) would serve as rapporteur and that it would consider items 4 and 7.

C. Attendance

14. The following member States were represented at the session: *[to be completed]*

15. The following non-Member State was represented: *[to be completed]*

16. *[to be completed]* were represented as observers.

17. The following United Nations bodies, secretariat units and convention secretariats were represented: *[to be completed]*.

18. The following United Nations specialized agencies and related organizations were represented: *[to be completed]*.

19. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: *[to be completed]*.

20. In addition, a number of non-governmental and civil society organizations were represented as observers. A full list of participants is set out in document UNEP/EA.3/INF/XXX.

D. General statements by regional groups

21. Following the opening of the session, representatives of regional groups of member States made general statements on the items on the agenda for the current session.

1. Group of 77 and China

22. The representative of Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed the hope that the Environment Assembly would be equal to the responsibilities vested in it as the preeminent decision-making body on the environment. In pursuing the goal of a pollution-free planet, the international community must strive as one and not be hamstrung by individual agendas and the desire to circumvent commitments made at the highest level of political leadership. Noting that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions was the greatest global challenge, he stressed that sustainable development in its three dimensions must be pursued in a balanced and integrated manner. The Agenda was complemented by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. He also welcomed the Paris Agreement and called on parties to implement it to the full.

23. He stressed the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations development system and called for special attention to the need to safeguard the natural environment in times of armed conflict and terrorist acts. Lastly, in line with the undertaking in paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The future we want", he stressed the importance of strengthening the Environment Programme headquarters functions at Nairobi.

2. European Union and its member States

24. The representative of Estonia, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine aligned themselves with his statement. Applauding the promising initiative of holding the third session of the Assembly back-to-back with the open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and welcoming the spirit of compromise that had enabled participants at that meeting to reach consensus, he said that the European Union looked forward to a consensus document from the current session setting out a meaningful long-term vision on tackling pollution in all its complexity. As affirmed in the draft resolution on the environment and health, it was vital to base common action on the precautionary principle and to take a cross-cutting approach to that issue. In that regard, the European Union called on the Executive Director to strengthen collaboration with the World Health Organization and other relevant organizations, stakeholders and the private sector to support countries in developing integrated environmental and health policies and environmental and health-risk assessments.

25. Welcoming the common understanding reached on the draft resolutions and decisions before the Assembly, the European Union urged participants at the current session to focus discussions on means of benefiting the health and well-being of people, their living environment and the planet's biodiversity.

3. African States

26. The representative of Gabon, speaking on behalf of African States and as Chair of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), said that pollution posed a serious threat to realization of the 2030 Agenda and its goals, along with Agenda 2063 of the African Union, and was therefore a fitting topic for the current session. Poverty eradication was the greatest global challenge of all time and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development; thus, any measure to curb pollution that did not support poverty eradication would not power the much-needed social transformation for the sustainable development of the continent. Regional forums such as AMCEN continued to play a very important role in the Assembly by promoting links between the global environmental agenda and activities at the regional and national levels and enhancing interregional cooperation; it was vital, therefore, to continue to strengthen those forums. Reviewing the outcomes of the sixteenth session of AMCEN, held in Libreville from 12 to 16 June 2017, he noted that the ministers had sought solutions to pollution which were development-oriented and would promote poverty eradication.

27. He stressed that effective implementation of all the resolutions tabled before the Assembly would require capacity-building, financial support and technology transfer. In that context, recalling the concern of African countries about the selective implementation of many former Environment Programme decisions that affected their region, he urged the Executive Director to facilitate funding for implementation in a balanced manner and to ensure balanced reporting in that regard by the Environment Programme. African States would continue to campaign for the strengthening of the presence of the Environment Programme in Africa. They welcomed the Executive Director's commitment to a transparent and inclusive consultative process regarding the proposed change of the organization's name.

4. Asia-Pacific States

28. The representative of Oman, speaking on behalf of Asia-Pacific States, said that the region that he represented was fully committed to implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other comparable undertakings, such as the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Declaration. Noting that the Asia-Pacific region included countries of all levels of development, he observed that development came at a price: unsustainable production had an impact on the environment, causing such adverse effects as sand and dust storms, marine and land pollution and other impacts on human health. Accordingly, regional environmental leaders had adopted a charter on sustainable development and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. They had also highlighted the threat posed by climate change to sustainable development and had adopted a flexible programme on climate change and a long-term vision on preserving the oceans.

29. Among the environmental priorities for his region, he highlighted the need to protect mountain environments and natural diversity, national strategies to combat sand and dust storms and their impacts on human health, and measures to preserve the environment in times of conflict and against terrorist acts. In that context, he reiterated the region's commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to the pursuit of a pollution-free future.

5. Latin American and Caribbean States

30. The representative of Colombia, speaking on behalf of Latin American and Caribbean States, said that the region strongly favoured the adoption of a ministerial declaration that reflected the global aspiration for a pollution-free planet.

31. Representatives of the region recognized the important role played by the Assembly as the leading authority that set the global environmental agenda. Accordingly, it was vital to ensure the effective participation of all the region's countries in that decision-making body, to ensure transparency and inclusiveness and to strengthen its universal character. The region's environmental vulnerability and the urgent need for joint response action were demonstrated by numerous extreme climate events that had caused over $200 billion in damage. At the current session, the region was submitting proposals for decisions that addressed priority issues in pursuit of the Assembly's goal and that were designed to strengthen its position.

E. General statements by United Nations entities and major groups and stakeholders

32. Characterizing climate change as connected to almost all the major challenges faced by humanity, the Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change provided an overview of challenges and recent developments on the climate change front. The Environment Programme's latest Emissions Gap Report had shown that while much progress had been achieved, it was still not enough, and the upcoming year would be crucial to reducing the climate threat and helping those already affected by it.

33. The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also identified close collaboration with United Nations agencies, as well as funds, conventions and bilateral and multilateral donor and development partners, as essential for facing environmental and sustainable development challenges.

34. The representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) said that the New Urban Agenda adopted in 2016 had underlined a number of key concepts, the first of which was that well-managed urbanization could promote the acceleration of sustainable development. The difficulty was, however, that it called for political dedication and the existence of appropriate legislative, urban planning and financial frameworks, added to which was the dominance of spontaneous urbanization, which guaranteed future challenges in unplanned urban areas. Secondly, in both developing and developed countries, climate change actions must be urgently embedded into urban planning and management processes in order to achieve the positive sustainable development outcomes expected from urbanization. Thirdly, those outcomes were also critically dependent on the development of urban national policies to address the problems associated with urbanization. In short, unless urbanization was moved swiftly onto the path of sustainability, the task of addressing climate change issues would be increasingly challenging.

35. A representative made a statement on behalf of the regional representatives elected to connect civil society groups in their regions with the Environment Assembly process and give voice to grassroots communities affected by environmental destruction and pollution across the globe.

36. A representative speaking on behalf of the women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, workers and trade unions, and scientific and technological community major groups called for addressing pollution through systemic change away from the economic model shaped by Governments and business. Rather than being subsidized, polluting companies should be required to clean up and compensate affected communities. The representative of the indigenous peoples major group subsequently added that indigenous peoples attempting to defend their territories against pollution were subject to various human rights violations and even killed, and proposed a number of measures to remedy the situation. In turn, the representative of the women major group added that political will, leadership and global policy were key, as was ensuring coherence between the environmental conventions and the environmental aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals. In a separate statement on behalf of children and youth, two representatives underscored the significance of education and proposed education as a theme for the fourth session of the Environment Assembly. Finally, another representative also speaking on behalf of the scientific and technological community recommended a number of actions by the Environment Assembly that included the establishment of a "Global Citizen Science Coalition", arguing that citizen science would facilitate scientific and community-based solutions and provide ways to integrate local and indigenous knowledge.

37. Stating that each source of pollution required specific tailored responses that reflected economic and social circumstances, the representative of the business and industry major group emphasized the importance of building national capacity and infrastructure to address pollution through sound regulation and management, innovation and pragmatic policy options and partnerships. Business could contribute experience, know-how and innovative capacity in all sectors, and was ready to work with Governments and other stakeholders to act to reduce pollution and its associated risks.

38. A representative speaking on behalf of the local authorities major group said that local and regional governments were crucial partners in the fight against pollution in view of their role in such areas as policymaking, awareness-raising and promoting civil society engagement. Their functions could also be leveraged to contribute towards improving urban air quality, strengthening channels for coherence, coordination and cooperation at all government levels, and enhancing the efficiency of pollution monitoring stations in providing essential data. For its part, the United Nations should pursue an integrated approach to pollution in order to secure delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

39. A representative speaking on behalf of the farmers major group urged member States to, inter alia, ban highly hazardous pesticides; promote agro-ecology and natural farming; put a stop to land grabs by corporations and the use of genetically modified organisms; and support the Human Rights Council's efforts to elaborate an international legally binding instrument to regulate the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights.

III. Credentials of representatives (agenda item 3)

40. *[To be completed]*

IV. Report of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (agenda item 4)

41. Mr. John Moreti, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and Permanent Representative of Botswana, presented the outcomes of the third meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives, held from 29 November to 1 December 2017, noting that an advance copy of the draft report had been posted on the portal of the Committee (UNEP/CPR/141/2). He reported that the main issues considered by the Committee had been the preparation of draft resolutions and decisions, as well as a ministerial declaration, for consideration by the Environment Assembly at its third session; administrative and budgetary matters; an update on the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook; and budget and programme performance, including the implementation of previous Environment Assembly resolutions.

42. With regard to draft resolutions and decisions, Mr. Moreti said that the Committee had succeeded in merging resolutions that dealt with similar issues and, out of the initial 16 resolutions and four draft decisions initially submitted, it had agreed to transmit to the Assembly nine draft resolutions and three draft decisions in total.

43. As for the remaining seven draft resolutions and two draft decisions, some of which had been finalized by member States during informal consultations held on the weekend immediately prior to the current session following a recommendation of the Bureaux of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the Environment Assembly at a joint meeting held on 1 December 2017, the Committee had agreed to recommend their adoption to the Assembly.

44. Similarly, the Committee had agreed to transmit to the Assembly, for its adoption, the draft ministerial outcome, on which consultations facilitated by the President of the Environment Assembly had been held during the third open-ended meeting of the Committee.

45. Following the presentation, the Environment Assembly agreed to forward to the Committee of the Whole, for finalization, the draft resolutions on marine litter and microplastics; environment and health; and pollution prevention and control in areas affected by terrorism and armed conflict, as well as the draft decision on the provisional agenda, date and venue of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

46. The Assembly further decided to forward to the Committee of the Whole two new draft resolutions that had not been previously considered by the Committee of Permanent Representatives, which related to, respectively, strengthening South-South cooperation initiatives for sustainable development and the consolidation of headquarter functions in Nairobi.

47. One representative, supported by another, expressed appreciation to the Committee for the work it had conducted in preparation for the current session and suggested that the draft decision on the provisional agenda, date and venue of the fourth session of the Assembly should be amended to ensure that the fourth open-ended meeting of the Committee was held immediately prior to the fourth session of the Assembly. The representative said that he would submit a concrete proposal for consideration by the Committee of the Whole.

V. Performance of the programme of work and budget, including implementation of the resolutions of the Environment Assembly (agenda item 5)

48. *[to be completed]*

VI. Administrative and budgetary issues (agenda item 6)

49. *[to be completed]*

VII. International environmental policy and governance issues (agenda item 7)

50. *[to be completed]*

VIII. Update on the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook report (agenda item 8)

51. *[to be completed]*

IX. High-level segment (agenda item 9)

52. The 3rd to 5th plenary meetings, on the morning and afternoon of 5 December and the morning of 6 December, took the form of a high-level segment under item 9 of the agenda. The high-level segment consisted of a formal opening and ministerial plenary meetings featuring an interactive dialogue on the overarching theme of "Towards a pollution-free planet", comprising an opening plenary with statements by key high-level speakers; national statements; leadership dialogues; a multi-stakeholder dialogue; a wrap-up plenary session; and a closing plenary session. Discussions were supported by the background report of the Executive Director on the theme of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, "Towards a pollution-free planet" (UNEP/EA.3/INF/3).

53. The high-level segment commenced at 10 a.m. on 5 December with a commemorative group photograph of participants in the hall. Following that event, opening statements were delivered by key high-level speakers.

1. Opening remarks

54. Opening remarks were made by the President of the Environment Assembly; the Executive Director of the Environment Programme; Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya; Mr. David Granger, President of Guyana; and Mr. Anthony Carmona, President of Trinidad and Tobago.

55. In his opening remarks, the President of the Environment Assembly recalled the fundamental agreement reached at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, that everyone had the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permitted a life of dignity and well-being, a principle that had underpinned environmental policy across the world ever since, most notably at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992; the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002; and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012..

56. In his remarks, the Executive Director recalled that 5 December, appropriately, was the first International Smog Day, commemorating all the people who had died prematurely – and avoidably – because of air pollution. The good news, however, was that the share of coal in countries' energy mix was declining dramatically and renewable energy sources were increasingly competitive. In addition, examples of good environmental practices across the globe were legion, from the ban on plastic bags in Rwanda and other countries to the construction of the world's first solar airport in India. Inspiration must be drawn and lessons learned from such initiatives and the political leadership shown by those countries must be universally emulated. \

57. In his address to participants, Mr. Kenyatta applauded the theme chosen for the current session and said that it was particularly fitting. Until relatively recently, the pursuit of prosperity had been undertaken with scant regard for the environmental costs. Today, across the world, the consequences of that careless attitude were all too visible. Representatives from all over the world had gathered at the current session because that lesson had finally been learned: lasting prosperity for all was not possible unless the environmental wealth of the planet was protected for all. The lessons had been learned in Kenya too, which had taken a range of mitigating actions, which, he hoped, would inspire other countries to do likewise. Turning to global issues, he recalled the recent Ocean Conference, held in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017, which had highlighted the pivotal importance of oceans to the planet, its people and their prosperity. The blue economy was an enormous source of wealth that could be tapped to fight poverty. In that context, he drew attention to the bid by Kenya to host the second

Ocean Conference in 2020 and, in the build-up to that conference, a global conference on the blue economy in 2018.

58. Following those remarks, Mr. Kenyatta declared the high-level segment open.

59. In his opening remarks, Mr. Granger said that the choice of theme of the current session reflected the growing international awareness of and consensus around the need to ensure environmental security for all human beings by tackling pollution. In order to address pollution, he said, it was essential that sustained awareness-raising campaigns be undertaken to educate households, communities and individuals around the world about the urgent need to tackle pollution; that international cooperation on pollution be strengthened in order to ensure that small States and other States had access to international finance and appropriate technologies; that the United Nations Environment Programme coordinate actions; and that pollution-related laws, from municipal laws related to mining to multilateral environmental agreements, be effectively implemented and enforced.

60. Drawing attention to efforts undertaken by Guyana to become a model "green state", including through the creation of new protected areas to protect biodiversity and ecosystems from the threat of pollution, he said that small States such as Guyana had limited capacities and would require international support to achieve their green development objectives, expressing hope that the Environment Assembly would advance the cause of a pollution-free planet for the benefit of both present and future generations.

61. In his statement, Mr. Carmona said that pollution was a cancer that must be addressed through long-lasting solutions premised on multilateralism, interdependence, inter- and intra-generational equity, and collaborative partnerships between member States and all relevant stakeholders, including environmental non-governmental organizations.

62. In closing, he said that beating pollution would help countries to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 13, 14 and 15, and expressed hope that the Environment Assembly would agree on a "global compact" on pollution that would make pollution prevention a priority and set the stage for improved ocean governance, more sustainable consumption and production, multi-stakeholder partnerships to tackle pollution and pollution-related education, and show, through open dialogue, that a symbiotic relationship between economic development and environmental integrity was both possible and necessary.

63. Ministers and other high-level representatives of countries delivered statements addressing the theme of a pollution-free planet. A number of representatives expressed appreciation to all those who had worked hard to prepare for and organize the present meeting, and to the Government and people of Kenya for hosting the meeting.

64. Many representatives placed the present meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly within the wider context of a number of crucial global environment-related agreements that had recently been put in place, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Several stressed their countries' commitment to implementing policies, strategies and other measures that reflected the interlinkages between those agreements and the need for a holistic approach to combating the environmental challenges facing the planet. In that regard, some representatives also highlighted the importance of synergies with the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Information Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, as well as with the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

65. Many speakers alluded to the daunting challenges faced in achieving global environmental objectives. Environmental risks accounted for millions of deaths per annum worldwide, including from polluted air and waterborne diseases. The negative impacts of climate change and global warming, including sea-level rise, increased incidence of hurricanes and forest fires, desertification and glacier melting, were being experienced by many countries. One representative drew attention to the significant contribution of black carbon emissions to temperature increases in the Arctic regions, accelerating global climate change. Several representatives highlighted the particular challenges facing certain vulnerable countries, including small island developing States.

66. Given the scale and diversity of the global environmental challenge, many representatives said that the theme of the present Environment Assembly – a pollution-free planet – was particularly timely and apposite. Several recognized the link between that aim and the efforts to eradicate poverty, with socially and economically disadvantaged groups, especially in urban areas, particularly vulnerable to chemical contamination and atmospheric and water pollution. Several welcomed the report of the

Executive Director, "Towards a pollution-free planet", as a valuable addition to the global debate on how to combat pollution in all its forms. One representative said that it was necessary to put in place policies that went beyond pollution reduction and aimed to revitalize the regenerative capacity of ecosystems.

67. Some representatives mentioned financial and other contributions they had made to combat pollution and support the global environmental agenda. The representative of Sweden said that his Government was committed to investing, as voluntary commitments, more than $100 million in 2018 for international and domestic measures related to pollution-free seas, responsible plastic management, clean air and the reduction of pharmaceutical pollution. The representative of Germany said that his Government had contributed €13 million to the Partnership for Action on Green Economy and had provided financial aid to the newly established International Sustainable Chemistry Collaborative Centre in Bonn, Germany, and also aimed to support two projects in the areas of sustainable transport and environmentally friendly cooling processes with funding of up to €20 million from 2019.

68. A number of representatives expressed their support for the ministerial declaration on a pollution-free planet that was currently being deliberated by the Environment Assembly at its present session. One representative said that the declaration paved the way for the implementation of governance, institutional, technological and financial mechanisms that would enable scale-up of actions to prevent, mitigate and manage the pollution of air, land and soil, freshwater and oceans. To achieve that objective, the message of the document needed to be clear and focused, and accessible to all stakeholders. One representative said that the declaration was important to the political visibility and credibility of the Environment Assembly.

69. A number of representatives highlighted various measures that could be undertaken within a coordinated approach whereby reduction in pollution was an outcome of a broader, environmentally sensitive agenda. One representative said that there was a pressing need to fill gaps in existing regulatory frameworks to ensure that all forms of pollution were addressed, and supported the development of an international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, for example on the seabed.

70. One representative emphasized the need to integrate economic and environmental policies, stating that environmental activities had greater chance of success when they were harmonized with economic and social factors. Another representative said that economic policies must be synchronized with sustainable development, as envisioned by "The future we want". Another said that in the developing world, the main challenge to sustainable development had been achieving a development path that measured progress not in quantitative terms but in terms of the quality of life of people, especially the vulnerable and dispossessed. Some representatives said that a vision of harmonious co-existence between people and nature lay at the core of their national efforts to protect the environment and improve the quality of life of the population. One representative said that his country aimed to cultivate ecosystems based on respect for nature and green development. Another representative said that the economy should not be seen as an enemy of the environment; prosperity and growth could be achieved in ways that did not involve overconsumption and overexploitation of natural resources at the expense of the environment.

71. Several representatives said that there was a growing need for innovative solutions to combat environmental threats generally and pollution in particular. One representative praised the inclusion among the activities surrounding the present session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the Sustainable Innovation Expo as a showcase for sustainable technologies, and applauded the efforts of the Environment Programme to convene diverse stakeholders at the science, policy and business forum. Some representatives highlighted the importance of cutting-edge solutions in complex urban environments, including enhancement of energy efficiency, less carbon-intensive technologies, and smart transportation networks. One representative said that the private sector had the potential to play a key role in technological innovation and the development of mechanisms for sustainable financing and investment.

72. The environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste was seen as an area of particular importance in combating pollution. Several representatives urged adoption of a "circular economy" approach to achieve preventive and efficient management of solid waste. One representative underscored the importance of further streamlining the technical and financial instruments, including the Global Environment Facility, towards supporting extended producer responsibility for waste and chemicals management.

73. The proliferation of plastic products and waste was identified as another issue of growing global significance. Plastic wastes, including discarded plastic bags, containers and microplastics, were ubiquitous in even the most remote marine and terrestrial environments. Several representatives

said that their countries had banned the manufacture and use of plastic bags or were in the process of doing so, and would be extending the ban to other types of plastic products in the future. Marine litter was viewed as a particular priority for action, and several representatives noted their countries' support for and involvement in such initiatives as the Clean Seas Campaign and the Stop Plastic Waste coalition.

74. The value of cooperation and coordination in order to achieve environmental objectives was a major theme. At national level, Governments needed to involve industry, civil society, academia, young people and others in policy formulation and decision-making in order to achieve broad-based support, consolidate awareness among all members of society, and encourage environmental commitment. At international level, cooperation between countries was essential, given the transboundary nature of many forms of pollution.

75. A number of representatives attached importance to models of cooperation that recognized the different capabilities and needs of countries. Several representatives said that developed countries should support and assist developing countries in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, while recognizing the right of developing countries to economic and social development. One representative said that development of "green economy indicators" would allow each country to implement appropriate policies according to their priorities and national capacities, and expressed hope that commitments made at international level in terms of funding, technology transfer and capacity-building for developing countries would be fully respected.

76. In the context of increasing concern about the scale of the environmental damage afflicting the planet, and the growing awareness of the urgent need to rectify the situation before changes became irreversible, the role of the Environment Programme as the United Nations body mandated to deal with environmental issues was taking on a new level of importance. Likewise, as one representative said, the Environment Assembly was the key global forum for addressing the fundamental environmental challenges confronting humanity.

X. Adoption of the outcomes of the session (agenda item 10)

77. *[to be completed]*

XI. Election of officers (agenda item 11)

78. *[to be completed]*

XII. Provisional agenda and date of the fourth session of the Environment Assembly (agenda item 12)

79. *[to be completed]*

XIII. Other matters (agenda item 13)

80. *[to be completed]*

XIV. Adoption of the report (agenda item 14)

81. *[to be completed]*

XV. Closure of the session (agenda item 15)

82. *[to be completed]*